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**Directed work with examples intended for L2 MANAGEMENT
students**

“MARKETING module”

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8-Political Marketing

1-Definitions:

Political marketing is a relatively new terminology in mainstream political science literature. Political marketing implies the usage of marketing tools, techniques and methods in political process. In other words, political marketing is the outcome of the marriage between marketing and politics.

As an activity and method, it reflects the penetration of the political space by marketing. Political advertising, Celebrity endorsements, involvement of professional consultants and campaign managers, online campaigning, mobile phone canvassing, segmentation, micro targeting etc are some of the methods extensively used in political marketing.

Basically the marketing concept holds that the needs of consumers are of primary concern and should be identified, and attempts made to satisfy the identified needs. The marketing concept in commercial terms is based on the premiss that all company planning and operations will be customer oriented and the goal is profitable sales volume and that all marketing activities in organizations will be organizationally co-ordinated.

As such the philosophical basis of the marketing concept is that customer want satisfaction is the economic and social justification for an organization's existence. When a political party or candidate applies this concept to the political process, they must be in a position to adapt to and satisfy voters' needs (Mauser, 1983 ; Newman and Sheth, 1987 ; Reid, 1988). Nimmo (1970) argued that candidates dispense information in order to produce a shift in behaviour and maintain voter support. To do this effectively requires a sufficient understanding of the values placed by voters on selected factors or criteria when arriving at a choice (Newman and Sheth, 1987). Houston's (1986) interpretation of the marketing concept provides a linkage between the marketing exchange process and the marketing concept as a means of creating and facilitating effective exchanges. Marketing has been extended to include all organizations and their relationships. Relationships are with any public not just

commercial customers and, therefore, include exchanges of value between any social entities (Kotler, 1972).

Politics falls within marketing's extended domain centrally because an exchange takes place when a voter casts his or her vote for a particular candidate. They are engaged in a transaction and exchange time and support (their vote) for the services the candidate offers after election through better government. Marketing, then, is applicable to political processes as a transaction occurs and is specifically concerned with how transactions are created, stimulated and valued.¹

The concept of politics in the Oxford dictionary is « Science concerned with the state or part of one's type, organisation, and administration » (Rees and Gardner, 2005).

Political Marketing : A Harrop (1990) concept perceives political marketing not only as political advertisements, political party broadcasts and electoral speeches, but also as covering the whole sector of party positioning in the electoral industry.

Political campaigning is seen by Kavanagh (1995, 1996) as electioneering, i.e. as a collection of techniques and resources to trace and research public sentiment before and through an election cycle, to build and measure the effect of campaign messages. Scammell (1995) shares a related opinion.

« Maarek (1995) conceptualises political marketing as « a dynamic mechanism, the product of a more global endeavour involving all the variables of the political communication of the politician » and stresses that « 'political marketing' is the general 'political communication' tool, one of its ways.

He finds the advent of political messaging as an outcome of « the implementation of a programme of political communication ... a global technique of contemporary political communication design, rationalisation and conveyance. » Lock and Harris (1996) find out that « political marketing is concerned with engaging with community stakeholders, media and future support outlets as well as the public, » while Wring (1997) describes political marketing as « the use of opinion polls and environmental analysis by the party or nominee to produce and promote a strategic product that will help accomplish organisational priorities and objectives. » O' Cass (1996) argues that the use of marketing « offers political parties the opportunity, by marketing research, preparation, execution and control of political and

¹ Aron O' Cass , Political marketing and the marketing concept. European Journal of Marketing 30,10/11. P38

electoral strategies, to answer diverse voter interests and needs. » « The core goal of political messaging is to encourage political parties and citizens to make the most effective and satisfactory choices, » he claims, bringing this one move further. In order to describe political communication, O ‘Cass (1996) utilises an exchange model.

According to him, a trade takes place as electors cast their ballots. The party / candidate promises stronger government and strategies after elections in exchange for their support. In this way, O ‘Cass claims, since it is primarily interested in how these purchases are made, induced and valued, marketing may be extended to political processes.

Commenting on the exchange paradigm, Lock and Harris (1996) claim that it has ‘a lot to give as a functioning concept of political messaging’ . Scammell (1999) states that there is still no agreement on the concept of political marketing because of the fast growth and the diversity of this area of research. In her opinion, political marketing shares with tradition the ability to clarify the actions of political figures, shares the desire to comprehend political systems with political science, and shares a curiosity in the art of persuasion with political communication.²



<https://www.collidu.com/presentation-political-marketing>

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² Sunitha B K, Sandeep Shashtri. Understanding the Concept of Political Marketing. International Journal of Advances in Engineering and Management (IJAEM) Volume 3, Issue 7 July 2021, pp : 2414-2417 www.ijaem.net. P2414

2-Functions of Political marketing :

Functions of political marketing are pre-requisites for successful political marketing management. According to political marketing theorist, there are 8 generic functions of a successful political marketing which includes the following:

1. Product Function: In political marketing practice, there should be an exchange between political parties and electorate in the electoral market. Like mainstream marketing each political party has to offer some product which they wanted to sell in the market. Here party wants to market its product which is the promise of a good government. In some cases, the product may be image of the candidate, an ideology or certain specific foreign policies. Hence the entire marketing process is designed to market the product. In USA, the main product function of Democratic party was to sell Obama Brand and a good governance based on change.

2. Distribution Function: The distribution function refers to the conditions regarding the availability of exchange offer to the exchange partner. The function has two aspects- campaign delivery and offering delivery. The campaign delivery function provides the primary exchange partner- the electorate- with access to all relevant information about the political product. This includes the dissemination of information regarding crucial party policies and programs, placing the candidates in right channels, making sure that medium of distribution fits the ideology of the party etc.

3. Cost Function:

One of the main functions of mainstream marketing is to sell a product which is cost effective compared to other products in the market so that customer gets greater monetary satisfaction. In political marketing, cost function refers to the management of attitudinal and behavioral barriers of voters through calculated campaign strategies. The voter should receive all the information regarding the product without spending money for it.

4. Communication Function:

Communication involves the function of informing the primary exchange partner of the offer and its availability. It is often seen as the heart of political marketing. For a political party, it

implies, providing political content, political ideas and future programs but also aiding the interpretation and sense making of a complex political world. Often the communication function involves simplification of political messages, concise political stand etc. The communication function interacts with the campaign delivery aspects of the distribution function -the latter provides the medium while the former defines the content. The communication function prescribes a dialogue with the exchange partners – a multidirectional flow of information and shared agenda setting.

5. News Management Function:

This function is closely linked to communication function. But news management function is targeted to secondary exchange partners or intermediaries of which media is an important part. In other words it is the management of publicity of the candidate and party. Public relation activities, media management, online advertising campaign management etc are news management functions. In the era of communication revolution news management plays a vital role in success of political marketing.

6. Fund Raising Function:

In mainstream marketing fund raising is not an issue. But political marketing management cannot survive without fund raising. In fact the success of other functions largely depends on fund raising function. In order to provide the political actor with appropriate resources, a distinct fund raising function needs to be addressed. A political party depends to a varying extent on membership fee, donations, etc.

7. Parallel Campaign Management Function:

This function describes the requirement of co -coordinating the campaign management activities of a political party with those of parallel organizations. Coordinated and synergic use of managerial activities allows for a more efficient deployment of campaign resources. Furthermore, the use of parallel campaigns and the endorsements by other organizations can increase the trustworthiness of the political messages.

8. Internal Cohesion Management Functions:

Besides the external management aspects, internal structure and functions of the political party also needs to be managed professionally. The function is concerned with relationship with party members and activists as well as the spoke persons. The internal marketing

functions play a critical role in creating internal stability and therefore the credibility of the party regarding its outside image.³

3-Techniques used in political marketing :

Political messaging requires coordinated political strategies composed of multiple methods:⁴

***Direct Marketing:** This tool is the oldest tool used by political parties through speeches, rallies, propaganda films, messages etc... to reach out the target audience

***Competition Research:** Here the negativity messaging of the opposition parties will be illustrated with proper research. . It is actually focused on SWOT analysis that stresses that a competitor's vulnerability is one's own power.

***Digital Marketing:** Digital marketing strategies like social media advertisements, social media influencers, emails, peer group influencers etc.. are increasingly used by political parties.

***Market segmentation:** Political communications strategists use the market segmentation to target consumers with cultural, demographic, social characteristics, etc. to develop a positive outlook for the parties concerned

***Product Development:** The product is the group or philosophy, or the candidate, in political marketing. Since voters are very interested in learning about the campaign, the parties prefer to develop the product in the most productive and intricate way, such as developing their candidate's profile by showcasing his life's struggle, his successes, and his social , economic , cultural or political participation, etc.

***Market surveys:** These surveys are often carried out by political parties in order to objectively assess the candidate's reception and to formulate political campaigns accordingly.

***Branding:** With their ads, political parties often use branding. As a brand or a sign of prosperity, they represent their candidate.

³ Menon, Sudha Venu, Political Marketing: A Conceptual Framework. ICFAI Business School, Ahmedabad. 7 December 2008. P7-8

https://mpr.ub.uni-muenchen.de/12547/1/Political_Marketing_Conceptual_framework.pdf

⁴ Sunitha B K, Sandeep Shashtri. Opcit p2417

4-The Political Marketing Process:

The political marketing process as outlined in Figure 2 consists of four parts, namely the party (or candidate) organization, the environment which conditions its development, the strategic mix it deploys, and ultimately the market it must operate in adopting the maxim of Schumpeter (1943) that democracy is primarily concerned with parties' "competitive struggle for (the) people's vote", Gamble contends that:

"The main components of the modern political market are three; the existence of a mass electorate; competition between two or more parties for the votes of this electorate; and a set of rules governing this competition" (Gamble 1974).

Within the political market the key relationship is based around a concept central to marketing theory, namely that of exchange between buyer and seller. Thus citizens give their votes to politicians who, when elected, purport to govern in the public interest (Scott, 1970 and Lane, 1993). In a modern democracy the right to vote, commonly associated with the age of majority, allows for a mass electorate which can typically number well into the millions.⁵

⁵ Ahmet UYAR. Political Marketing Power To Change The Choices Of The Electors: A Study On 1 November 2015 General Parliamentary Elections. Journal of business research Turk.2016.p35. www.isarder.org

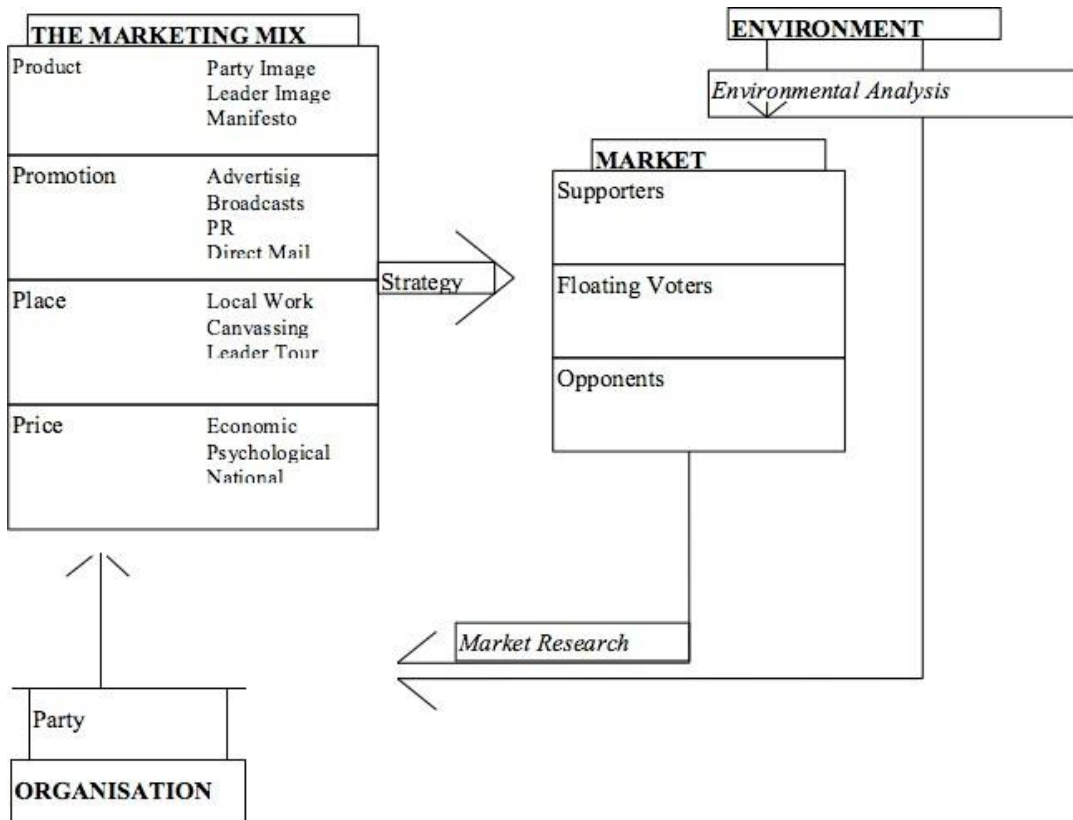


Figure: Political Marketing Process, Source: Wring, 1997